

New Road Primary School

New Road, Whittlesey, Peterborough PE7 1SZ

Inspection dates

23–24 September 2015

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Teaching, learning and assessment are inadequate because all groups of pupils are underachieving, and standards at Key Stage 2 are too low and not improving.
- The school does not prepare pupils well enough for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, have failed to hold teaching staff sufficiently to account for weaknesses in teaching and declining standards.
- The school's self-evaluation has been inaccurate.
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement because some pupils lack concentration in class and fail to show initiative.
- The curriculum is not fit for purpose and does not prepare pupils adequately for life in modern Britain.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs does not meet their needs adequately and the impact of support has not been measured.
- The early years requires improvement because not all activities for children promote their learning and assessment is not rigorous enough.
- Attendance has been too low; especially for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

The school has the following strengths

- The new executive headteacher has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has begun to carry out improvements.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and behave well in the playground and around the school.
- Reception children have adopted the routines of school life quickly and have settled well.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective and pupils feel safe in school.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education, and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that the progress of all groups of pupils accelerates in reading, writing and mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - written feedback to pupils helps them to improve their work, including their spelling, punctuation and grammar
 - teachers and support staff have high expectations of what all pupils can do and achieve
 - teachers and support staff understand the new assessment arrangements and make accurate and reliable judgements about pupils' attainment and what they need to learn next.

- Raise standards for all groups of pupils, particularly for those who are disabled or have special educational needs, so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education, by:
 - increasing the level of challenge so that pupils produce work of a high standard
 - ensuring the curriculum fully meets the needs of all pupils so that it is relevant, demanding and prepares them for life in modern Britain
 - reviewing the way phonics (the sounds that letters make) and reading are taught across the school to have the maximum impact on developing pupils' reading skills
 - making sure all pupils have sufficient opportunities to use and apply their skills in mathematics.

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, so that:
 - leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and enable staff to tackle any weaknesses rapidly
 - leaders ensure that the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are identified early and met fully and that they measure the impact of the support pupils receive
 - governors find out for themselves how well the school is doing in order to question and challenge the information they receive from senior leaders
 - leaders and governors sharpen up the school's systems for reviewing pupils' progress with teachers and the pupils themselves
 - subject leaders take an active role in bringing about rapid improvement in their subject areas
 - the school's website fully complies with government regulations.

- Reduce absence for all groups of pupils, especially for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those known to be eligible for free school meals, by:
 - keeping records of the absence rates of different key groups of pupils
 - raising the profile of the importance of good attendance with families and pupils
 - acting swiftly to challenge poor attendance.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- A period of turbulence in senior leadership means that leaders have not tackled deficiencies in teaching, learning and assessment.
- The school's tracking system is ineffective and teaching staff have lacked the training to make accurate and reliable judgements about pupils' progress.
- Leaders and governors have not taken effective action to stem the decline in pupils' progress, partly because the school's view of its own effectiveness has, until very recently, been far too generous.
- The leadership of the provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is ineffective. Leaders and managers have not checked the work of teachers and teaching assistants in supporting these pupils. This has led to considerable inconsistency in the quality of provision for them. The impact of support has not been measured and no changes have been brought in to improve the pupils' experiences.
- The leadership of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate. Leaders have not given teaching staff accurate feedback about their performance or worked with them to remedy weaknesses. Leaders have not given teachers sufficiently rigorous targets to hold them to account for the quality of their work.
- Subject leaders have done very little to develop their roles or to influence their subject areas. They have not checked the impact of work in their subjects or supported teaching staff in bringing about improvements.
- The curriculum does not meet the needs of pupils. It has not been tailored to suit them and its effectiveness has not been checked or its impact evaluated. Teachers have been left to make their own way in providing a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils, and this has fallen well short in many cases.
- Teaching staff and external providers offer a range of clubs, which pupils enjoy. Pupils take part in one-off events such as country dancing in Peterborough, or singing at the O2 Arena, but there is no coherent linking of enrichment activities to pupils' wider learning.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is spent appropriately on membership of a schools' partnership, coaching for pupils and swimming lessons. There is no record of the impact of this work on pupils' health and well-being.
- The pupil premium is spent on additional support for disadvantaged pupils and in subsidising a breakfast club. The impact of this work is highly variable and these pupils have done no better than other pupils in the school. Records are not kept of the attendance rates of disadvantaged pupils so it is not clear what impact the breakfast club has had.
- Pupils have very little understanding of British values and are not well prepared for life in modern Britain. While they have a sense of right and wrong and the need to treat one another fairly, they do not know about the democratic process. Apart from taking part in an International Week, they have limited experience of pupils from other cultures.
- Links with the partner school in the Learning Trust have reduced over the past year and so staff have not been able to share best practice or support one another in making judgements about pupils' learning.
- The school's website does not meet government regulations. There are some major omissions. For example, there is no reference to pupils' performance in national tests or a description of the curriculum.
- The new executive headteacher, who has only been in the school three weeks, has a clear understanding of the school's many weaknesses and what it does well. He has begun to bring in steps to improve matters, for example through checking pupils' progress every week. However, because he has been at the school for such a short space of time, there is very little improvement to show.
- The new executive headteacher has won the respect of the staff and the wider school community through the new culture he is establishing, which strives to celebrate success. There is a strong willingness among staff to share his vision for a better school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - is inadequate, as governors have not held leaders and managers sufficiently to account for pupils' underachievement or the decline in standards
 - has relied too heavily upon the information it has received from senior leaders in coming to its views

- about the school's effectiveness, and thus underestimated the extent of the school's weaknesses
- cares deeply about the school and did well to appoint the current executive headteacher, who is now providing clear leadership to the school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school has a safe culture and leaders engage well with parents, carers and others to keep pupils safe and deal promptly with any issues that may arise. Parents who spoke with the inspector expressed confidence in the school to support their children.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and achieve have been too low. Consequently, all groups of pupils have underachieved, and standards have continued to decline.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are inaccurate and unreliable. The tracking system has been changed on more than one occasion, and they have not received training in how to use the latest one. Teachers are not clear what pupils need to do next to improve their work.
- Teaching is not meeting the needs of key groups of pupils well enough. In particular, lower attaining pupils needing to catch up, and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are falling behind the others. This is because teaching staff have not received the support and guidance they need to work with these pupils effectively.
- The quality of the support pupils receive varies greatly. Some teaching assistants lack confidence in managing behaviour and in meeting pupils' needs. The composition of support groups is unbalanced, because pupils are often assigned to groups where the work is either too easy or too difficult for them.
- In books, feedback is having little impact on pupils' progress because it is either too positive or ignored by pupils. The presentation of pupils' work is poor; in fact, the best examples of handwriting come from pupils who have recently joined the school from elsewhere.
- There is evidence of low expectations among staff of the quality and quantity of work that pupils should produce in a range of subjects. In some cases, pupils were producing only one piece of written work per month last year.
- A system to help pupils understand how they were getting on has been unsuccessful because it was, to all intents and purposes, discontinued last autumn. Pupils are unsure about how to improve their work.
- The teaching of phonics is ineffective. Pupils often become restless and do not engage in repetitive tasks. When they are asked to write in books on the carpet it is difficult for them to do their best work and hard for teaching staff to see what they are doing to offer them guidance.
- The management of pupils' behaviour is consistent among teachers and there are positive relationships between teaching staff and pupils. Classrooms are generally orderly.
- On rare occasions, the teaching is effective and challenges pupils. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were observed producing good quality diary entries with a clear understanding of what was expected of them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils rely too heavily on the teacher to tell them what to do and do not think enough for themselves, for example about what to do if they have finished a piece of work. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 formed a long queue to have their work checked.
- Pupils do not take sufficient pride in their work; books are often untidy and presentation is poor.
- Pupils are unclear about how well they are doing because systems to help them understand have lapsed and they mainly do not act upon the teachers' marking.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and respond well when the teaching engages them, for example when playing sport.
- The school is a safe place and pupils say that teachers care for them well. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that any incidents are dealt with effectively. They know about e-safety and the potential risks from social media.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- When teaching fails to engage pupils sufficiently, pupils can become restless and not concentrate on their work. This sometimes happens when it is too easy or too difficult.
- Behaviour in the playground and around the school is good. Pupils are polite and courteous and support one another well.
- The school is an attractive place to learn. The classrooms are spacious and well resourced and the grounds have been planned carefully to make them stimulating to pupils, with zoned areas of interest such as a nature area and pagodas.
- Attendance was low last year. While it has improved so far this year, the school does little to promote attendance or make families and pupils aware of its importance. Leaders do not analyse absence by key groups of pupils, so are unaware how well disabled pupils and those with special educational needs or disadvantaged pupils are attending.

Outcomes for pupils

are inadequate

- In Key Stage 2, standards are too low for all year groups in reading, writing and mathematics. The quality of pupils' work is mainly poor. Attainment has not improved this year compared to last year and is well below average.
- In 2015 the proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the required standard in phonics fell greatly to 50%.
- All groups of pupils are not making sufficient progress from their different starting points. It is difficult for teaching staff to understand how pupils are doing because they are not confident in assessing pupils' progress accurately.
- The needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in particular are not being met. Their progress is not checked closely enough and no action has been taken to ensure that the support they are receiving is effective.
- The most able pupils are not given demanding enough work. They often finish early and have nothing more to do. Their books show that they are not being sufficiently challenged. No pupils reached the higher levels in writing in the 2015 Year 6 national tests.
- Reading skills are generally low across the school. Some pupils struggle to use their phonics skills and older pupils often have difficulty in using more complex skills such as inference.
- Spelling is weak everywhere. The school does not have an agreed policy for improving it.
- Handwriting is universally poor. There is no agreed approach to teaching handwriting.
- While there is some evidence of pupils using and applying their mathematical skills in Years 1 and 2, most pupils do not spend enough time solving real-life problems.
- Pupils enter Year 1 and leave Year 2 with broadly average standards. This means that the school does not add value to their experiences or accelerate their learning in Key Stage 1.
- Disadvantaged pupils do no better than other pupils, despite the use of the pupil premium. There were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2015 to comment on their progress without identifying them.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Children do not make the rapid progress they should because some activities have no clear learning focus. Teaching staff do not give children the full guidance or support they need to excel in their work. As a result, children sometimes flit from one activity to another, not sustaining concentration.
- The assessment of children in the early years is not rigorous enough. Approaches to assessment are too informal and it is difficult for parents or children to find their way around the 'learning journeys', which are records of children's achievements.
- There are too few disadvantaged children in the Reception Class to comment on their attainment or progress without identifying them.
- When left to their own devices, some children can become boisterous and disturb others.
- Children are enthusiastic, mainly cooperate well together and want to learn.
- Teaching staff have established classroom routines effectively. Children come in willingly, without their

parents first thing in the morning and settle to activities quickly and without any fuss.

- The classroom and outdoor area are arranged creatively for imaginative play. Children were very keen to keep the inspector stocked up with boiled eggs and pizza.
- Children's personal development is good. They are friendly and mainly polite. They are happy to talk about what they are doing. Children are safe and secure in school.
- Children leave the Reception class with average standards and are ready to start in Year 1.
- There are strong partnerships with parents, who are positive about their children's experiences, and feel they were well prepared for beginning Reception.

School details

Unique reference number	140538
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10001955

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	the governing body
Chair	Heather Maxwell
Executive Headteacher	Robert Litten
Telephone number	01733 204422
Website	www.newroadprimary.co.uk
Email address	office@newroad.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- New Road Primary School converted to academy status on 1 January 2014 as part of the Whittlesea Learning Trust. This consists of two schools, the other one being Park Lane Primary School.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are four mixed-age classes, including one that combines Reception children and Year 1 pupils. Reception children attend full-time.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- In 2014 the school met current government floor standards.
- A new executive headteacher of both schools in the trust took up his post in September 2015.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in 15 lessons or parts of lessons, most of them jointly with the executive headteacher. The inspector also attended two assemblies.
- The inspector heard pupils read and, with the executive headteacher, looked closely at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports and safeguarding records. He considered evidence of the academy's partnership work and the information provided for families.
- A meeting was held with a group of pupils chosen at random. A meeting was also held with pupils to consider their target files. Discussions were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and other staff. The inspector talked to the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors and the Chair of the Whittlesea Learning Trust.
- The inspector took account of the six responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. He also spoke informally to parents.
- The inspector considered the nine staff questionnaires that were completed.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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